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ference to that skull. It would be unbecoming in me to offer many observations. I will, however, conclude my remarks by referring to a point which can hardly be considered an ethnographical or cranio-logical question. I am looking at that little child's lower jaw. It is not a light matter to bring the charge of cannibalism against our old northern progenitors, however far back they may date. One would not willingly infer that they combined occasionally with their limpets and fish, the delicate animal food of a tender well-fed child of five years old, the age at which the dentition of this jaw clearly shows the poor little creature to have been. But yet I am compelled to admit that if I had been called upon to give professional evidence on such a case before a judge and jury, I should have first looked at the lower margin of the jaw. I have had experience of the way in which jaws of mammalia that have been used for food have been dealt with by the old primitive flesh-eaters of a period perhaps as remote as the oldest of these; and I find that when they came to the lower jaw, after picking off the flesh in a general way, as indicated by the marks on the superficies, by chipping the lower margin of the jaw, they proceeded to lay open the dental canal, which contains something nearly analogous to that which they never failed to get out of the marrow bones. Now, there are clear indications that this has been practised with this child's lower jaw. The whole of the dental canal in which runs a substance analogous to marrow has been laid open, and I cannot help suspecting that this substance has been sucked out, and agree therefore, with Mr. Laing, in thinking that that dear little old young creature has not come fairly by its end, and that this jaw really belongs to the same category with regard to its use and purpose with the other multifarious animal remains, the refuse of the meals of the old Caithness meals. I again thank most cordially my friend Mr. Laing—an old fellow labourer, for I am indebted to him for some interesting fossil remains from his former neighbourhood in Hampshire—for his valuable paper. I did not expect that so soon after his return from graver duties, I should again have to thank him for such a fine body of information on this most interesting subject, the study of which we are associated together to promote.

The following paper was then read:—

On the Discovery of Large Kistvaens in the Mücke Heog, in the Island of Unst, Shetland, containing Urns of Chloritic Schist, by GEORGE E. ROBERTS, Esq., F.G.S., Hon. Sec. A.S.L. *With Notes upon the Human Remains* by C. CARTER BLAKE, F.G.S.

[This paper is published in the first volume of *Memoirs*.]

The thanks of the Society were voted to Mr. Roberts and also to Mr. Blake, and the discussion being invited on the two papers,

Professor OWEN: With regard to the smallest skull—that of the female—from Shetland, I do not remember to have seen one that presented so strong a resemblance, especially in the fore part of the skull, to the cranial characters which we find in the Australian race, both with regard to its prognathism and to the very strongly-

marked supranasal indent between the short nasal bones and the forehead, as the skull marked B. If I had seen that part of the skull only, I should have thought that it came from Australia; but the anthropologist is at once undeceived by looking at the comparatively small molar teeth, the large size of which especially distinguishes the Australian and Tasmanian races. Those characters of a jaw-bone, which Mr. Blake has pointed out, are well exhibited in the larger skull (A.) There is one character which I see in two of these—that tendency to sloping away from the mid-line in a roof-line fashion that is so strongly marked in the Esquimaux.

MR. ALFRED TYLOR: I think it is stated on Mr. Franks's authority, that stone vessels have been used in the north of Europe; but I remember in the Swedish Court of the Great Exhibition seeing a number of vessels made from steatite—which were sent there as articles in general use in the present time for boiling milk, etc. They are, I think, the nearest utensils to those described by Mr. Roberts. I do not know whether any gentleman here saw them. They were of various sizes, and about as deep as they were broad, made of steatite, a mineral which occurs in the serpentine of Sweden. I think this paper is particularly interesting as proving that the custom of carving out vessels from stone, in which water or milk may be boiled, has existed so long and still exists in the north of Europe. I have not seen anything of the kind in the south.

SIR CHARLES NICHOLSON: I beg to offer my humble testimony to that given by Professor Owen as to the extremely interesting and instructive nature of the communication read by Mr. Laing. The lucid and graphic way in which the facts have been brought before the notice of the Society has been such as to give a most accurate conception of them. Certainly, a much more accurate conception has been afforded to me by those details than from any account I have hitherto had the opportunity of reading. One or two points have suggested themselves to me on listening to the debate this evening. I confess, that whilst I think much has been urged by the author of the paper to establish the antiquity of the remains presented to us this evening, and to show that there is a fair presumption of their belonging to the earliest stone age, I still think there are difficulties in the way of coming to that conclusion which would induce me to hesitate in subscribing to it altogether. In the first place, in reference to the implements which were found in the stone kists and which are now on the table, they are regarded by Mr. Laing as distinct specimens and types of the implements used by the people with whom they were interred. Now, such a conclusion is, perhaps, scarcely to be relied on. I think it is exceedingly probable that the natives of that part of the British islands whose remains are discovered in this particular position, when they made these interments, would hardly be likely, in consequence of the value and scarcity of the implements of warfare and of domestic use, to bury them even with the bodies of the chiefs and those whom they were anxious most to honour. It is exceedingly likely that they would use very rude examples of what were their ordinary implements, just as we find in the middle ages on

the skeletons of bishops and dignitaries of the church, and even of monarchs, leaden rings and paper ornaments in substitution of the more costly materials worn by the individuals during their life time. In the same way, these people may have interred in the graves of their deceased friends, these rude similitudes of implements that were in actual use at the time they lived. There is an obvious discrepancy in the supposition that the people who used these excessively rude and inartistic materials, as knives and spear-heads, could have constructed such really admirable masonry as we see exhibited in those drawings, which I presume are correct. Those stones are evidently squared, by some sort of metal instrument I should imagine. At all events, great care must have been bestowed in the squaring and laying of them, and I think they indicate a much higher attainment of the arts of civilised life than would be implied in these objects. Without presuming to offer any very reliable opinion upon these skulls, I confess that when I saw them I was not prepared at first to find skulls presenting so much of the ordinary normal character as these do. It would not really be difficult to go to any cemetery and bring skulls that would present as favourable a development as those on that table. Even the worst of them might, I think, be matched by skulls of people belonging to the present period. With reference to the age of this structure (the tower), I still think it is not quite clear that it may not be much more modern than is implied. The kitchen middens were collected on the sites of strongholds, towers, bergs, such as I believe studded the whole of that part of Scotland. I think I have seen such in Orkney, where there are several on the coast: some in the neighbourhood of Kirkwall, of this character, where you have concentric rings which form the foundation of strongholds which are not older than the days of the vikings and of the Scandinavian population, who were constantly making descents on our shores and establishing themselves for a time. I am sure we are all very much indebted to the author of this very interesting and elaborate paper; and also to Professor Owen for that most interesting fact he has mentioned of the existence of the remains of a bird that is no longer to be found in any part of the British islands or of Europe. The extinction of that bird does not, I think, argue any very great antiquity; for, I believe that in the memory of some persons present, birds that were exceedingly common in the southern hemisphere are quite extinct now. I allude to the *Nestor productus*, a beautiful parrot well known in Philip's Island.

Mr. BENDYSHE: I do not know whether Mr. Laing attempted to found an argument on the absence of cremation; but I think a simple reason would explain that. There was nothing to burn the bodies with. There is no evidence of the existence of forests or of wood enough even to make canoes with. To burn bodies would take a great deal of fuel, and it is clear there would not be sufficient material. With regard to the child, I have not the least doubt that the jaw-bone was sucked as Professor Owen describes; but I hope that this occurred merely in the same way as Mr. Laing says they devoured the seals and whales—that they merely took the children after

death and did not kill them for the purpose of sucking their bones; but, that when the child had died, they thought it might be put to an useful purpose.

Mr. REDDIE: I have a suggestion to make to Mr. Laing, whose careful observations made in opening these kists have given us so much pleasure. With reference to those drawings, where we have three distinct structures represented as being built upon separate midden foundations, possibly those shells were placed under the foundations of the buildings for the purpose of drainage. When I was in Caithness, I remember noticing that the greater part of the country is peat moss; and I should think that anyone building on the soil in most parts would have a very bad foundation indeed. As there is very little gravel to be found, it would be about the best thing the inhabitants could do, to collect shells and put them underneath the stones in order to drain their buildings properly. With regard to the buildings themselves, if I recollect rightly, there are plenty of stones on the coast of Caithness, formed by nature almost in the shape those are, so that I think the remark of Sir Charles Nicholson is not borne out, that those represented in the drawing must have been formed by metallic tools. But I think Mr. Laing can inform us that there are plenty of buildings in Caithness, even now, not nearly so good as those in the drawing—with not nearly such nice fire-places. I have been in some where there is no attempt at a chimney, but where the fire is kindled on the floor. The amount of skill evidently displayed in building these houses would justify, I think, my conclusion that their builders had the sense to drain them well; and I know of no material better in Caithness than shells. The absence of large wood is well known: I believe there is not a bush as thick as my arm in the county. And then, it is a curious fact, in connection with these and the Danish “kitchen middens,” that the people in this county are Scandinavian, and not like the people in the adjoining county who are Celtic. One other question might be interesting. I was much amused when I was at John o’Groat’s house, to find that it was like one of these slightly elevated mounds. It would be interesting to examine it, and ascertain whether it is a pre-historic dwelling or not. As the story goes, John o’Groat had a great idea of equality, and built his house an octagon, that he and his seven sons should be on a level. Some time ago we had a paper about “the man of the future,” in which we were told we were all to be equal; it would be curious if it were found, that in the history of man, extremes have thus met in such a fashion!

Mr. MACLEAY: It is possible that John o’Groat’s house may be a pre-historic dwelling. The people of Caithness consist of two races. On the coast they are Scandinavians; in the west country and the interior they are Celtic. I understand Mr. Laing to say, that he does not suppose these more elaborate buildings were erected by the people who were buried in the mounds, and whose implements are now upon the table, but that they were put up by a second race—a metallic race; that these buildings are secondary buildings, erected upon the ruins of buildings put up by the people of the stone period—buildings which really assume a very respectable aspect on paper.

The estate of Keiss belongs to a cousin of mine, and I know the neighbouring country well. Several of these so-called Picts houses have been pointed out to me; one of them I found converted into a conservatory, and the stonework has a most respectable aspect. I have little doubt that these dwellings have been put up by a comparatively civilised race—most probably by the early Scandinavian race who occupied the coast of Caithness and who were a superior race to the one whose remains we see on the table. I quite agree with the gentleman who spoke last, that among the bothies in Caithness, you will see fire-places not to be compared with these; indeed, in that respect, the present race have, I think, rather degenerated from their predecessors. Perhaps it would be well for them to be here to see these drawings of the fire-places constructed by their ancestors. I would ask my friend Mr. Laing whether he does not think the remains discovered in the excavation on the moor may not be very much more modern. When I was first there the spot since excavated struck me as looking very green, while the surrounding vegetation was all brown moss; the stones on the surface looked as if they had been squared with a chisel; and, on asking one of the Gillies what the history of the place was, he told me that the tradition was that it had been an old Roman Catholic chapel. Now the building traced on the drawing does look something like a chapel. It is quite possible, that the stone benches on the side may have been meant for the congregation and the recesses or processes at the end may be parts of the altar. I only know that that is the tradition on the spot. It appears altogether of a far more modern character than the others. All these Scandinavian remains are circular, and this is the only angular building of any antiquity I have seen there.

Mr. LAING then replied. He said: there are one or two points to which I had better at once refer, while I remember them. My friend, Mr. Macleay, suggests that the angular building marked in the drawing is a chapel. I think that the size, which is only twelve feet long, is a sufficient answer. Certainly, it would accommodate a very limited congregation. I have seen very small chapels in Cumberland, Westmoreland, and throughout that district, but I never saw anything so small as that. I agree, however, that the building is probably of a different and a later date than the other dwellings. With reference to the drainage, I think I can give an answer which will set that question at rest—namely, that these middens are not simply a mass of shells, but are intermingled with fragments of bones, animal teeth, greasy animal matter, charcoal, stone implements, etc., showing that they must have gradually accumulated *in situ* and not have been transported thither. Moreover, the site is not on a peat moss, but on the raised beach by the sea-shore, which is as dry as anything can be in that rainy climate. At the same time, I think they have been used for drainage by subsequent inhabitants. Suppose that to-morrow you should sweep off the whole population from Orkney and Caithness, and a new people were to come upon those islands, I venture to say, that in four cases out of five, the cottages would be fixed upon these mounds for the advantage of drainage. As regards cremation, I think that though there were probably no great forest trees or oaks out of

which canoes could be hollowed, the country was overspread with a short scrubby forest, of which you will find the remains in the peat mosses. The red deer would hardly have existed where there was no wood. In addition to which there is a great quantity of wood charcoal in these middens, though generally mere branches and twigs of a size insufficient for canoes. If they had plenty of wood for cooking their fish and other things, the probability is, that they would have enough for cremation if it had been practised. As to what Sir Charles Nicholson says about the weapons in the tombs—whether in fact they might not have been dummies—I would remind you, gentlemen, that in kists of a later period, there would seem to have been spared no expense in interring with the departed chiefs the best that could be obtained. Instances are innumerable where horses and slaves have been sacrificed for that purpose, and perhaps one half of the specimens of stone implements now to be seen have been obtained from these tombs. In the museum at Copenhagen, I have seen instances of dummies, but they were invariably well fashioned; and besides, there are knives and hammers taken from kitchen middens, that were evidently in daily use, of precisely the same pattern and just as rude as those interred in the kists. There was one question as to the age of these circular dwellings. It is very important that everyone should understand—I can pledge my word for the fact—that there is not the mark of a tool on any stone connected with any one of these dwellings. The red sand-stone strata of that part of Caithness is split up into forms of surprising regularity. At Duncansdy head there is a cut in the rock, where the sea comes in, that is piled up so regularly that you might believe it to be cyclopean masonry piled up in layers. While exploring, I have constantly come upon stones, which I have thought must have been fashioned by man, till I looked in the adjoining bothies, where I found blocks just as regular. Now the question is, whether some of these circular towers may not be much older than any Scandinavian period—as old as the primitive race. I can pass no opinion except from the presumption founded upon the solid wall of that circular dwelling invariably going down to the natural rock, and having the midden accumulated upon it. I do not see how that wall should have gone five feet lower than any of the others, unless the midden had been built at the same time. With regard to the other structures, they are undoubtedly of a later period. All these appliances of fire-places, chimney-pieces, etc., are comparatively recent. They are the work of the people who constructed the third pavement and adapted it to more civilised uses; and, for all I know, these people may have lived in the last few centuries. But the old circular buildings must, I think, be very much more ancient than anything of the Scandinavian date, which, as we know, does not go further than the ninth century A.D., when Harold Harfager established his kingdom in Norway and sent the vikings to seek abodes elsewhere, and they came to Orkney and Caithness. They then, no doubt, adopted these round towers and used them for fortifications as we know the one of Maeshowe was used. Maeshowe ran off with the wife of one of the kings of Orkney, and stood a siege in the round tower. In Orkney, you have kists of the

bronze period. I could mention other cases where the old circular wall has been partly eaten away by the encroachments of the sea in very sheltered bays and in situations showing great antiquity. Therefore, without expressing a decided opinion, I think it is quite an open question, and it is to my mind quite conceivable that almost savages might have constructed these dwellings though working with very rude instruments. I have always thought that the best clue to what savages would do is to see what children do. Children will constantly build beautiful round towers with even stones; but the same children, if they had nothing but the unequal instruments of Caithness would have had great difficulty to get the beautiful cutting tools that you see there. That does not affect the to my mind conclusive evidence of these excessively rude weapons being found buried in graves and similar descriptions of stones being found invariably.

The discussion was adjourned till the 20th instant.

DECEMBER 20TH, 1864.

CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON, V.P., IN THE CHAIR.

THE minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The names of the following gentlemen who had been elected Fellows were announced; F. R. Izard, Esq.; Robert Marshall, Esq.; Captain Samuel R. J. Owen; E. Tinsley, Esq.; Dr. J. Hillier Blount; G. C. Rankin, Esq.; C. Plummer, Esq.

The following presents were announced, and the thanks of the Society given to the donor (Mr. Conrad Cox). Kirkpatrick, "Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul;" Hodges, "Travels in India;" Turner, "Embassy to Thibet;" Isenberg and Krapf, "Journals in Abyssinia."

MR. C. CARTER BLAKE stated that a letter had been received from Mr. Pengelly in reference to some remarks in the discussion on his (Mr. Blake's) paper on Kent's Hole in the Journal of the Society. The following is the letter referred to.

To the Editor of the Journal of the Anthropological Society of London.

DEAR SIR,—Having taken an active part in the cavern researches which, at various times during the last twenty years, have been made in this county, I was much surprised on reading the following statement in the last (the November) number of the Journal, page cclxxv (mis-paged cclxv in my copy), viz.—"Mr. Roberts said that about four years ago the sum of £450 was granted by the Royal Society for the complete examination and clearing out of Kent's Hole, and a committee was appointed for the purpose; but owing to the gentlemen who composed it residing so far from the spot, and to other circumstances, they did not do much towards the accomplishment of the desired object. The chief thing they did was to discover about twenty flint implements in the mud of the cave, the whole of which were in his possession. He was afraid that nothing else was done by that committee, etc."